

Assignment 1 Part 3

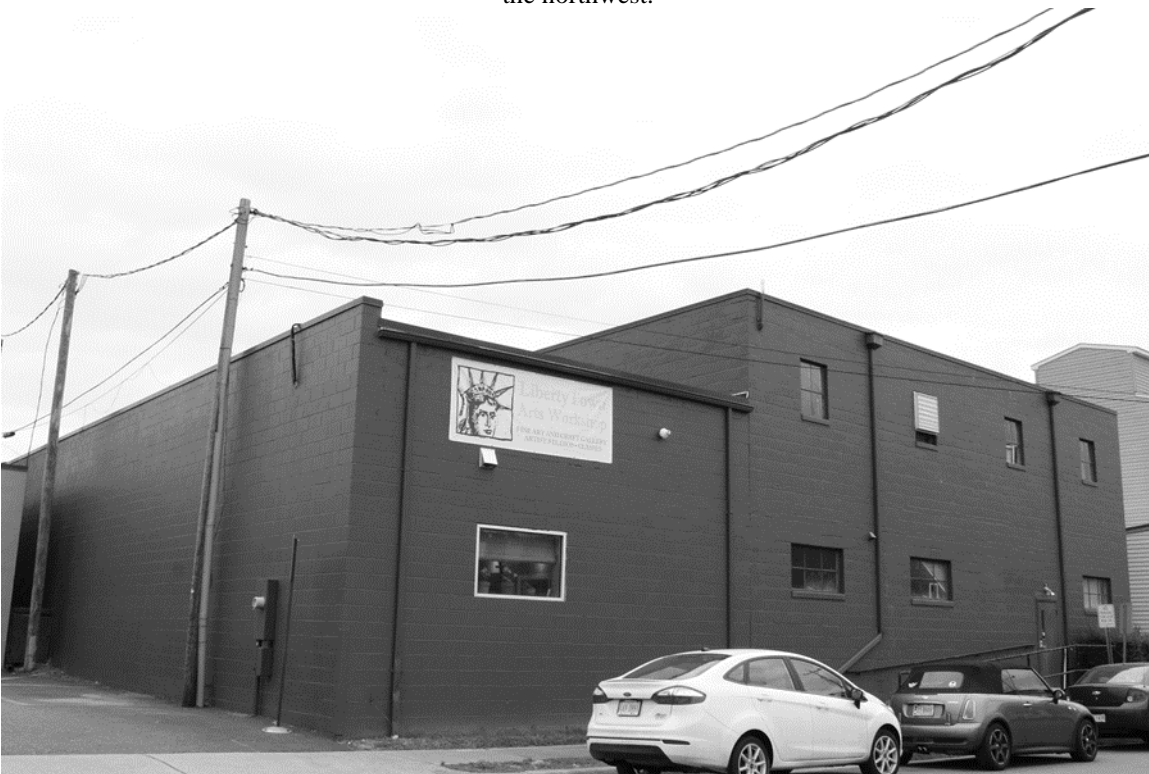
Architectural Description:



#1. Front façade, east elevation, view to the west.



#2. Context view of LibertyTown Arts Workshop, northeast elevation, east exterior wall and surroundings, view to the northwest.



#3. Rear and opposing side façades, north and west elevation, view to the southeast.

The building, LibertyTown Arts Workshop, is located at 916 Liberty St., Fredericksburg, Virginia, 22401 (Image 1). The front elevation faces the northeast and is located across the street from 2000 Liberty St., which houses the New Post Apartments. Liberty St. is a one-way street with no dividing lines. To the west of LibertyTown Arts Workshop are two parking lots. One of the lots is used for public parking, while the other is the parking lot of the Central Rappahannock Heritage Center. To the south of the building are two dwellings and George St., and to the north are five businesses (Image 2). 916 Liberty St. was built between 1902-1907 according to the Fredericksburg Sanborn Maps. It is a one-story, one-bay structure that has three additions to the north, west, and south of the building, which makes the complete structure four bays. The rear addition to the west also adds a second story to that part of the building, but the rest remains one story (Image 3). The building is a storage warehouse, massed plan, with a flat roof. The structure is made of concrete blocks with vertical weatherboard siding on the extension to the south.

916 Liberty St. is 80 feet from 904 Liberty St. to the south of it, five feet from 903 Barton St. to the west, and a foot from 608 William St. to the north of it. The property is separated from Liberty St. by a parking lot and sidewalk to the east. 916 Liberty St. is not parallel to the road and is placed at an angle, forming a triangular area used as a parking lot. From the parking lot's longest horizontal side, there are approximately 15 ft in between 916 Liberty St. to the sidewalk and four ft of sidewalk to the road. From the shortest point of the parking lot, there are about five ft in between the structure and the sidewalk.



#4. Front façade, west elevation, view to the east.



#5. North and east façades, north and east elevation, view to the southwest.



#6. Main entrance door, east elevation, view to the west.



#7. Garage door and building addition, south elevation, view to the north.

The foundation of the building consists of concrete blocks, the same material used for the main structure, excluding the addition to the south and doors. The structure is a massed plan, and the structural system is wood framing, based on the 1919 Sanborn Map that shows the building in yellow, indicating framing. Aside from the extension to the south made of vertical weatherboard siding, the exterior walls are made of concrete blocks or cinder blocks. The wall finish is navy blue paint, with one section decorated with a painting of a “Liberty Town” stamp (Image 4). The north-facing wall and extension towards the north display two multicolored murals. The mural on the wall facing to the north depicts elephants, and the mural on the extension displays a beach with palm trees and the sun (Image 5). There is one window opening on the front facade to the north of the building. The window is made of frosted glass blocks in a 4x7 layout. The other openings on the front elevation are the main entrance and a garage door on the southern extension. This structure has a side passage with double leaf single-pane glass doors with a rectangular transom and sidelights (Image 6). The transom and sidelights have been filled in with stained glass. The garage door has 4x5 panels, with each panel being 1x1 ft (Image 7).



#8. Front and side façades, south and east elevation, view to the northwest.

916 Liberty St. has a false front only noticeable from the side elevations, which means that the front of the structure appears taller than the building is (Image 8). The structure has a flat roof; however, a small, hipped overhang, made of asphalt shingles, connects to the main structure's false front creating the appearance of a low pitched roof. The extension to the south has a standing seam metal, low pitched shed roof, and is shorter than the main structure.

Narrative History:

916 Liberty St. was constructed by 1907, according to the 1907 Sanborn Maps.¹ Though the structure may have been built earlier, it could not date earlier than 1902, since the map shows

¹Sanborn Map & Publishing Company. *Sanborn Fire Insurance Map from Fredricksburg, Independent Cities, Virginia*. New York: March, 1907. Map. From Library of Congress, geography and Map Division https://digitalsanbornmaps.proquest.com/browse_maps/46/8931/43786/45865/618761?accountid=12299.

no building on the lot at that time.² Based on the timeframe of its construction, the building was built by Silvenus J., or S. J., Quinn, who received ownership of the property after the death of his wife, Josephine DuVal, in 1878. He owned the property until his death in 1910 when he split up the property between his second wife and children.³ S. J. Quinn was born in Georgia, but he was living in Mississippi when the Civil War broke out and joined the Confederate army.⁴ In 1863, “an army lodge of Masons, was established” in Fredericksburg by the Mississippi troops, and Captain Quinn was made a Mason there.⁵ Quinn was also an active member of the Fredericksburg community, as he was described as an “efficient Secretary of the Fair Society” in 1891. The Fair Society was a group that organized and orchestrated a fair in Fredericksburg that would host merchants, exhibitions, and judgments of livestock and farm products; this was the oldest agricultural fair in the U.S.⁶

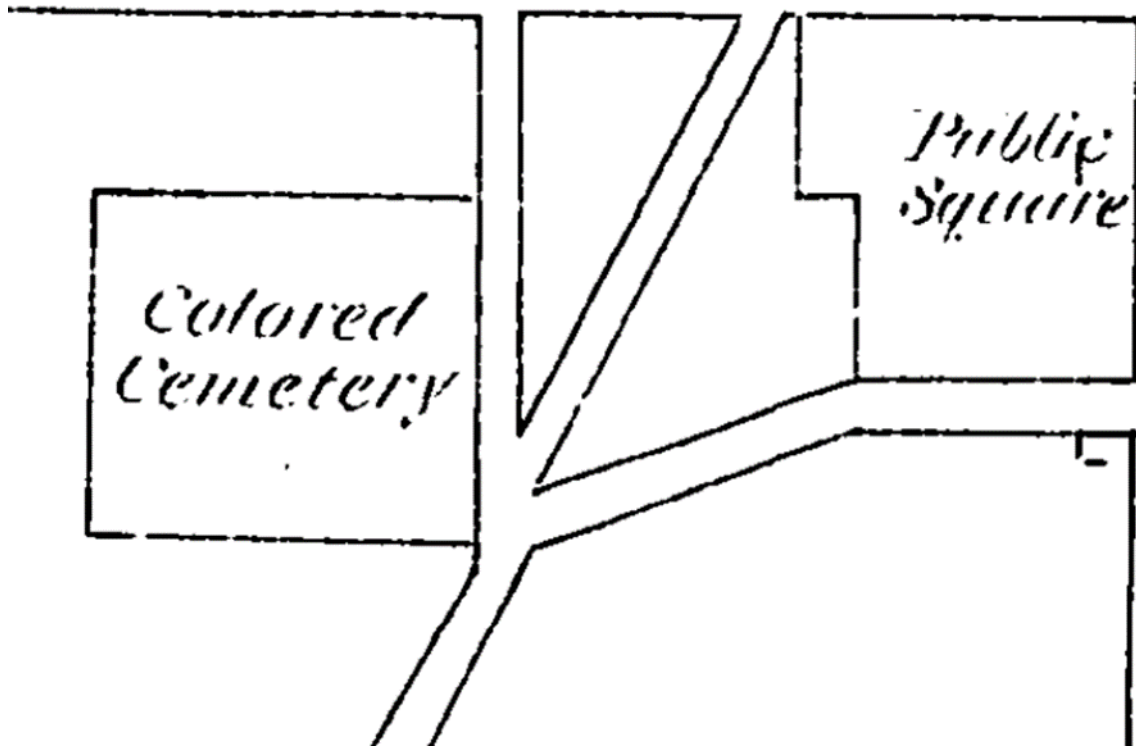
²Sanborn Map & Publishing Company. *Sanborn Fire Insurance Map from Fredricksburg, Independent Cities, Virginia*. New York: March, 1902. Map. From Library of Congress, geography and Map Division https://digitalsanbornmaps.proquest.com/browse_maps/46/8931/43785/45864/618751?accountid=12299.

³Will of S.J. Quinn, 15 October 1909 (filed 13 September 1910), Fredericksburg, Virginia, Will Book J, Page 241. Fredericksburg Courthouse, Fredericksburg, Virginia.

⁴“Masonic Honors” *The Daily Star* (Fredericksburg, VA), November, 16 1899.

⁵Ibid.

⁶“The Fair” *The Daily Star* (Fredericksburg, VA), September 27, 1905.



(Figure 1) Liberty St. from the 1886 Sanborn Map showing its location between a public square and “colored” cemetery.⁷

The property of that 916 Liberty St. was later built on was originally owned by James DuVal in 1853. Liberty St. was not included within the boundaries of the City of Fredericksburg until 1891.⁸ However, the map index shows that 916 Liberty St. was located to the east of a public square and west of a “colored” cemetery (Figure 1). Once DuVal died, the property was passed on to his daughter, Josephine DuVal, who was married to S. J. Quinn in 1866.⁹ Between the 1881 and 1899 census, Josephine DuVal passed away, since she was not listed in the 1900 census. At this time, Quinn was a superintendent for City Water Works and continued to be so

⁷Sanborn Map & Publishing Company. *Sanborn Fire Insurance Map from Fredericksburg, Independent Cities, Virginia*. New York: March, 1886. Map. From Library of Congress, geography and Map Division https://digitalsanbornmaps.proquest.com/browse_maps/46/8931/43782/45861/618728?accountid=12299.

⁸Sanborn Map & Publishing Company. *Sanborn Fire Insurance Map from Fredericksburg, Independent Cities, Virginia*. New York: March, 1891. Map. From Library of Congress, geography and Map Division https://digitalsanbornmaps.proquest.com/browse_maps/46/8931/43783/45862/618733?accountid=12299.

⁹“Married to S. J. Quinn” *Virginia Herald* (Fredericksburg, VA), June, 7, 1866.

throughout the latter years of his life.¹⁰ S. J. Quinn remarried in 1904 to Mary Lou Henson who received ownership of the property after the death of Quinn in 1910.



(Figure 2) Henry Deane dwellings along Barton St.¹¹

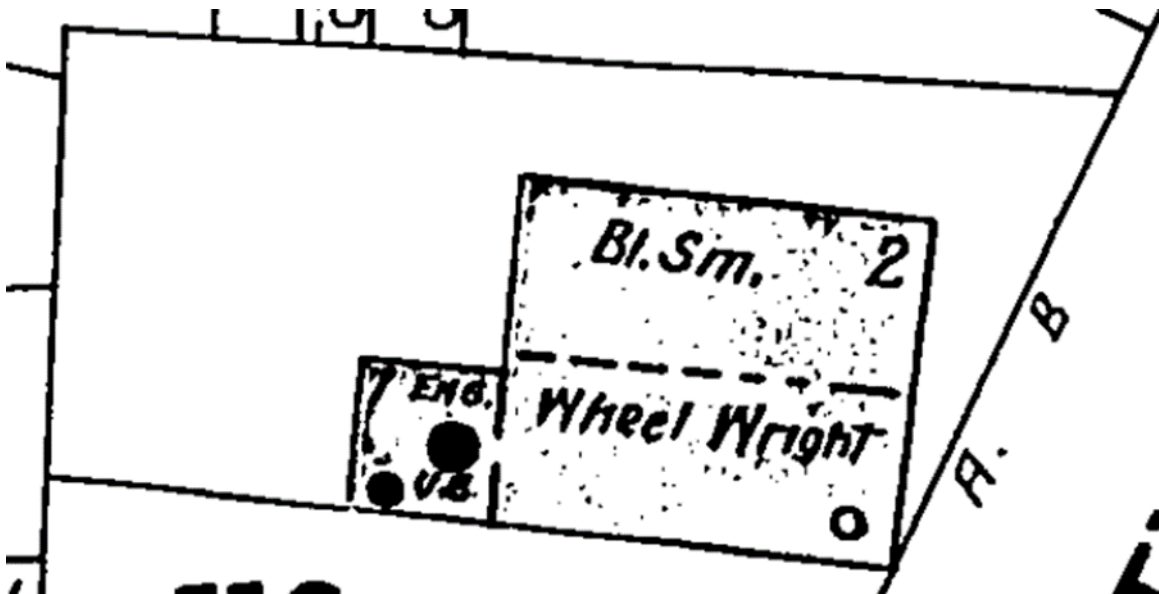
During the time the DuVals owned 916 Liberty St., in 1891, the property did not have any buildings on it. However, surrounding the empty plot were commercial buildings, including drug stores to the north and south of 916 Liberty St., with some grocery stores in between the drug stores. There were no dwellings recorded in this location at this time, which is a stark contrast to the 1896 map. The 1896 map depicts many new dwellings/buildings near 916, or 207, Liberty St.¹² This change in function of the surrounding structures illustrates the work of Henry

¹⁰1900 List of Inhabitants of Fredericksburg in Enumeration District 90 (Upper Ward), Family 370, Dwelling 337, Lines 38-43; June 1, 1900; Fredericksburg Research Resources.

¹¹Mary Beth Gatz, Gary Ward Stanton, and Susan. Taylor, *Liberty Town: the Past and Present of a Fredericksburg Suburb*, Fredericksburg, VA: Center for Historic Preservation, Mary Washington College, 1994, 19.

¹²Sanborn Map & Publishing Company. *Sanborn Fire Insurance Map from Fredricksburg, Independent Cities, Virginia*. New York: March, 1896. Map. From Library of Congress, geography and Map Division https://digitalsanbornmaps.proquest.com/browse_maps/46/8931/43784/45863/618740?accountid=12299.

Deane and his wife, Lucy Deane. In the late 1880s, the couple “paid local carpenters to build residences on land they had acquired,” and they named their business “Liberty Town.”¹³ After the Civil War, many of the buildings that were once located there had been destroyed, and the marshy land was considered undesirable to white developers. This allowed Deane to buy the property and construct 19 houses.¹⁴ These homes were sold to African American individuals, creating a community. Specifically along Liberty St., only two stables and one dwelling were built.¹⁵ One of these livery stables was attached to a blacksmith business that was established between 1891 and 1896, according to the Sanborn Maps. This Deane-owned stable was most likely placed near the blacksmith shop as a business tactic. Since a blacksmith could create or repair parts of a carriage, while a carriage was being fixed the horses from the carriage could be boarded at the livery.



(Figure 3) The first appearance of 916 Liberty St. from the 1907 Sanborn Maps in which the structures are listed A and B.¹⁶

¹³Historic Fredricksburg Foundation, “Henry Deane, Liberty Town Entrepreneur,” *The Journal of Fredricksburg History*, Vol.15 (2016): 27, <https://hffi.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/03/Journal-Vol-15-Final.pdf>

¹⁴Ibid 28.

¹⁵Ibid 30.

¹⁶Sanborn Map & Publishing Company. *Sanborn Fire Insurance Map from Fredericksburg, Independent Cities, Virginia*. New York: Dec.1907. Map. From Library of Congress, geography and Map Division https://digitalsanbornmaps.proquest.com/browse_maps/46/8931/43786/45865/618761?accountid=12299.

By the time 916 Liberty St. was constructed by S. J. Quinn, the community that the Deanes created did not last long. In 1909, about two years after 916 Liberty St. was built, Alvin T. Embrey purchased Deane's properties and sold them to his brother. His brother, W.S. Embrey implemented a "whites only" policy on the properties he sold, as per contracts common in new developments in Fredericksburg.¹⁷ The shift in Liberty Town's land becoming more desirable to white developers was a result of Deane's development in making the land inhabitable and profitable. Furthermore, the loan industry was beginning to evolve in the late 19th and early 20th century. Loans provided a way for developers to invest in an area with less risk. Therefore, white developers saw Liberty Town as an up-and-coming area that, despite any risk, they could manage with the use of loans.¹⁸

Before the discrimination policy, 916 Liberty St. received business from the Black community that lived there. The property housed the business of H.I. Oswald, who was said to have "one of the largest blacksmithing and wheelwrighting trades in Fredericksburg."¹⁹ The structure, in 1907, was composed of fireproof/resistant brick construction. It was two stories for the blacksmith and wheelwright companies and one story for the engine and boiler room that was attached to the wheelwright business to the west.²⁰ At the time, the property listed the conjoined structures as A and B on the Sanborn Maps.²¹

¹⁷Ibid 31.

¹⁸Ibid 30.

¹⁹Mary Beth Gatza, Gary Ward Stanton, and Susan. Taylor, *Liberty Town: the Past and Present of a Fredericksburg Suburb*, Fredericksburg, VA: Center for Historic Preservation, Mary Washington College, 1994, 22.

²⁰A wheelwright: a person who makes or repairs wooden wheels.

²¹Sanborn Map & Publishing Company. *Sanborn Fire Insurance Map from Fredricksburg, Independent Cities, Virginia*. New York: March, 1907. Map. From Library of Congress, geography and Map Division https://digitalsanbornmaps.proquest.com/browse_maps/46/8931/43786/45865/618761?accountid=12299.

In 1912, the property received its current 916/914 Liberty St. address, and the plot that contained 918 Liberty St. was expanded to include two plots to the north of it. The change in property lines could be due to the redistribution of Deane's properties, as people bought more than one parcel of land. Mary L. Quinn owned the property at this time, during which the structure underwent one change to the exterior: the addition of stairs to the west side of the building attached to the blacksmith business.²² The stairs could have been added to reach the second floor from the outside of the building, but their purpose is unknown as they were later removed. In 1916, Mary Quinn sold the property to Stephen Pratt and Jamie Lee Pratt, who birthed a son the following month after purchasing the property.²³ The Pratts exemplify a trend of people with families purchasing the property throughout the years; although, many of these families did not run the businesses on the property. For instance, S. J. Quinn worked at City Water Works while owning the property Oswald's business was located on. It appears that this property was an investment rather than a place these owners used for their own business.

²²Sanborn Map & Publishing Company. *Sanborn Fire Insurance Map from Fredricksburg, Independent Cities, Virginia*. New York: March, 1912. Map. From Library of Congress, geography and Map Division https://digitalsanbornmaps.proquest.com/browse_maps/46/8931/43787/45866/618769?accountid=12299.

²³"Son Arrives" *The Daily Star* (Fredricksburg, Va) July 25, 1916



(Figure 4) 916 Liberty St. in the 1919 Sanborn Maps in which the business of the building changes to farming products.²⁴

In 1919, the exterior stairs were removed, and the blacksmith and wheelwright businesses were replaced with a farm products business.²⁵ The engine room no longer hosted an engine, and the 1919 maps label the structure as a frame dwelling.²⁶ This business change could have been due to the changing economy of the 20th century, since fewer dwellings were being constructed and more stores were established in the area, including a department store and tire repair shop

²⁴Sanborn Map & Publishing Company. *Sanborn Fire Insurance Map from Fredericksburg, Independent Cities, Virginia*. New York: May 1912. Map. From Library of Congress, geography and Map Division https://digitalsanbornmaps.proquest.com/browse_maps/46/8931/43787/45866/618769?accountid=12299.

²⁵Sanborn Map & Publishing Company. *Sanborn Fire Insurance Map from Fredricksburg, Independent Cities, Virginia*. New York: March, 1912. Map. From Library of Congress, geography and Map Division https://digitalsanbornmaps.proquest.com/browse_maps/46/8931/43787/45866/618769?accountid=12299.

²⁶Ibid.

along William St.²⁷ With the rise of the automobile, there was less of a demand for a wheelwright business since fewer people would have been using wagons. If the wheelwright and the blacksmith businesses worked in tandem, as seen with how they were housed in the same building, when one started to lose demand, both businesses would have left the property.

In 1927, the farm products business transitioned back to a blacksmith and the wall separating the two spaces of 916 and 914 Liberty St. was removed from the main structure, making it one open area. Another change made to the building is a small, one-story addition to the west side of the building. The property line has also expanded to encompass the neighboring structures to the north of 916 Liberty St. At the time, W.H. Bawler owned the property since 1918.²⁸ The property was passed down in the Bawler family until 1947 when Emerson Bawler sold the land to P. Evans Shelton and his wife Sayde Shelton.²⁹ P. Evans Shelton had a past of purchasing businesses as seen with his purchase of Mr. Jacob Bonner's clothing store in 1921.³⁰ Prior to working as the owner of the clothing business, Shelton worked at the Home Beneficial Association, a "Virginia corporation engaged in the sale of ordinary, industrial, life, and health and accident insurance."³¹

The jobs the owners of this property had were mainly corporate or retail jobs. This trend continues with the next owner D. Letcher Stoner who worked as a hardware merchant.³² He

²⁷Mary Beth Gatz, Gary Ward Stanton, and Susan. Taylor, *Liberty Town: the Past and Present of a Fredericksburg Suburb*, Fredericksburg, VA: Center for Historic Preservation, Mary Washington College, 1994, 22.

²⁸Deed of Sale from R.L. and Nora Clore to W.H. Bawler, 13 June 1918 (filed 29 June 1918), Fredericksburg, Virginia, Deed Book 50, Page 325. Fredericksburg Courthouse, Fredericksburg, Virginia.

²⁹Deed of Sale from Frank Kline and Jennie; Emerson Bawler to Evans & Sayde Shelton, 19 July 1947 (filed 31 July 1947), Fredericksburg, Virginia, Deed Book 84, Page 77. Fredericksburg Courthouse, Fredericksburg, Virginia.

³⁰"Buys Clothing Buissness" *The Daily Star* (Fredricksburg, VA) December 31, 1921.

³¹Home Beneficial Association of Richmond, Va., "In the Matter of Home Beneficial Association of Richmond, VA. and Industrial and Ordinary Insurance Agents' Council," Case Text, November 28, 1939, <https://casetext.com/admin-law/home-beneficial-association-of-richmond-va>.

³²1940 16th U.S. Census, Virginia, Fredericksburg (Upper ward), S.D. 1, ED No.107-4 Dwelling 1204, Lines 23; April 2, 1940; Fredericksburg Research Resources.

bought the property from the Sheltons in 1949.³³ The occupation of the owners seem to show that the property was sought out by individuals with an entrepreneurial nature and were well-off enough to take the financial risk of owning a commercial structure. D. Letcher Stoner displays this wealth by, aside from 916 Liberty St., owning a total of 31 properties in 1949. Letcher Stoner also was known in the Fredericksburg community for transforming his hardware warehouse into a museum that displayed various man-made objects such as a typewriter, kettle, and pitchfork.³⁴ Letcher Stoner did use 916 Liberty St. as a plumbing annex of Stoner's hardware store.³⁵ During the 1950s, Stoner using a warehouse for plumbing supplies was understandable given that plumbing was frequently evolving during the 20th century and becoming more refined. By the 1950s, plumbing was relatively standardized, therefore, there would have been more of a demand for plumbing supplies for people to handle repairs. Furthermore, being in a historic district, some people may have had homes with older plumbing systems that needed to be replaced.³⁶ Currently, historic homes are usually up to date with plumbing, hence there being a lack of need for large plumbing warehouses today since people mainly need to do smaller, infrequent repairs.

In 1985, the property was passed down in a deed of gift to his wife, Violette M. Stoner. The property is currently in the Stoner family and owned by Letcher Stoner's daughter, Mary Weber Stoner Taylor, and her husband Weber Stoner Taylor.³⁷ The current business of Liberty

³³Deed of Sale from Evans and Sayde Shelton to Letcher Stoner, 22 April 1949 (filed 29 April 1949), Fredericksburg, Virginia, Deed Book 86, Page 373. Fredericksburg Courthouse, Fredericksburg, Virginia.

³⁴Barbara Crookshanks, "The Past Recreated." Mechanical Bank Collectors of America, *The Antiques Journal*, March 1971, http://www.mechanicalbanks.org/scrapbook/1970s/pages/1971-03_antiques_journal.htm.

³⁵"About Libertytown" libertytownarts, Liberty Town Arts Workshop, <https://libertytownarts.com/about-libertytown/>.

³⁶Henry, Christine, "Building Systems: Water and Waste," Hisp 305: Historic Building Technologies, (class lecture, University of Mary Washington, Fredericksburg, VA, April 4, 2022).

³⁷Deed of gift from Mary Stoner Taylor to Weber Stoner Taylor, 8 August 2013 (filed 9 August 2013), Fredericksburg, Virginia, Deed Book instrument 130002217. Fredericksburg Courthouse, Fredericksburg, Virginia.

Town Arts Workshop was founded in 2002 by Dan Finnegan and “changed hands in...2013 to Dolores and Kenneth Lecky.”³⁸

916 Liberty St. has shown itself to be an integral part of the Liberty Town area in the past, being a prominent African American community for a few decades. It was a useful blacksmith and wheelwright business to the residents of Henry Deane’s community and for the residents that came after. Furthermore, it shows an example of how historically Black communities were torn down and lost to history. Today it is used to bring artists together to showcase their work to the Fredericksburg community and host workshops for people to acquire new artistic skills.

Material Investigation:

Shifting the focus to how the materials of the building interact with its history, in 1907, the structure was composed of fire-resistant materials for construction. It was a two story structure for the blacksmith and wheelwright companies and a one story structure for the engine and boiler room that was attached to the wheelwright business to the west.³⁹ At the time, the Sanborn Maps listed the conjoined structures as A and B.

In 1799, 1807, and 1822 there were widespread fires in Fredericksburg, Virginia, which altered the way buildings were constructed during the mid-19th century and forward. After the fire in 1822, people looked towards replacing frame structures with brick buildings.⁴⁰ However,

³⁸“About Libertytown” libertytownarts, Liberty Town Arts Workshop, <https://libertytownarts.com/about-libertytown/>.

³⁹A wheelwright: a person who makes or repairs wooden wheels.

⁴⁰Gary Stanton, “‘Alarmed by the Cry of Fire’: How Fire Changed Fredericksburg, Virginia,” *Perspectives in Vernacular Architecture* 6 (1997): 122. <https://doi.org/10.2307/3514367>.

this change was mainly in the more dense, urban areas of Fredericksburg where people had their “capital assets at risk.”⁴¹

When 916 Liberty St. was constructed, Liberty St. was mainly a residential area due to the work of Henry and Lucy Deane in the 1880s.⁴² There was not much density on the Liberty St. block since the residences are on the outskirts of downtown Fredericksburg. As a result of these circumstances, 916 Liberty St. was not constructed of brick or concrete blocks as it is today. However, in the 1907 Sanborn Map, the structure is colored green to indicate the use of fire resistant materials (figure 1). In the Sanborn Maps after 1907, the structure is shown to be a wooden frame structure. While wood can never be fireproof, some types of wood are more flame resistant than others. Therefore, when the 1907 Sanborn Map showed that the structure was built with flame resistant materials, it most likely indicated that it was built with timber that could slow down the spread of a fire. The wood frame can be seen today by the exposed ceiling (figure 2). Based on the pink-red color of the wood, the structural wooden beams are most likely cedar. Cedar is also known for being very durable and resistant to insect and water damage.⁴³ Due to cedar’s durability, the structural beams are probably original to the structure. The saw marks are also visible on the wood, as seen by how evenly spaced and shallow they are (figure 3).

⁴¹Ibid.

⁴²Historic Fredricksburg Foundation, “Henry Deane, Liberty Town Entrepreneur,” *The Journal of Fredricksburg History*, Vol.15 (2016): 27, <https://hffi.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/03/Journal-Vol-15-Final.pdf>

⁴³James Rogers, “The History of using Cedar in Design and Building,” Outdoor Living Today, Outdoor Living Today, March 23, 2016 <https://outdoorlivingtoday.com/history-using-cedar-design-building/>.

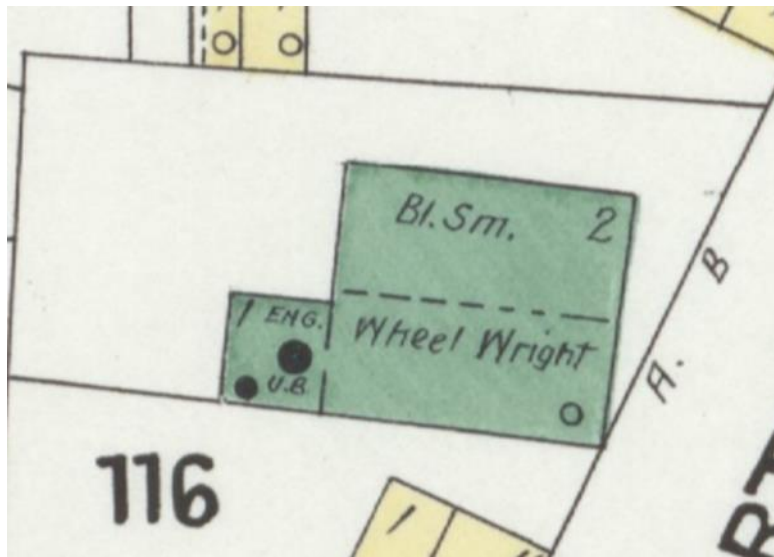


Figure 1: 916 Liberty St. on the 1907 Sanborn Map



Figure 2: The exposed ceiling of 916 Liberty St. showing the wood frame.



Figure 3: Saw marks shown on the wooden beams.

The framing system of 916 Liberty St. is consistent with the nearby surrounding area which is mainly composed of wooden frames aside from a few brick structure businesses. Another blacksmith business, located across Liberty St. from 916, was also shown to be constructed of fire resistant materials in the 1907 map, but it is later shown as a wooden frame building in the maps following the 1907 one.⁴⁴

Since its construction between 1902 and 1907, 916 Liberty St. has gone through numerous modifications. In 1912, the property received its current 916/914 Liberty St. address, and the structure underwent one change to the exterior: the addition of stairs to the west side of

⁴⁴Sanborn Map & Publishing Company. *Sanborn Fire Insurance Map from Fredericksburg, Independent Cities, Virginia*. New York: March, 1907. Map. From Library of Congress, geography and Map Division https://www.loc.gov/resource/g3884fm.g3884fm_g090211912/?sp=7&r=0.247,0.713,0.266,0.177,0.

the building attached to the blacksmith business.⁴⁵ In 1919, the exterior stairs were removed, the blacksmith and wheelwright businesses were replaced with a farm products business, and the engine room no longer hosted an engine.⁴⁶

In 1927, the farm products business transitioned back to a blacksmith shop and the wall separating the two spaces of 916 and 914 Liberty St. was removed from the main structure, making it one open area. This open area can be seen today as outlined in the footprint of the building (figure 4; measured drawing). Since the building is home to art studios, there are non-structural walls placed to create some of the smaller areas outlined in the footprint; however, the current business, LibertyTown Arts, has not structurally altered the open area that was created in 1927.⁴⁷ Another change made to the building, in 1927, was a small, one story addition to the west side of the building.

⁴⁵Sanborn Map & Publishing Company. *Sanborn Fire Insurance Map from Fredericksburg, Independent Cities, Virginia*. New York: March, 1912. Map. From Library of Congress, geography and Map Division https://digitalsanbornmaps.proquest.com/browse_maps/46/8931/43787/45866/618769?accountid=12299.

⁴⁶Ibid.

⁴⁷Sanborn Map & Publishing Company. *Sanborn Fire Insurance Map from Fredricksburg, Independent Cities, Virginia*. New York: Feb, 1927. Map. From Library of Congress, geography and Map Division https://digitalsanbornmaps.proquest.com/browse_maps/46/8931/43787/45866/618769?accountid=12299.

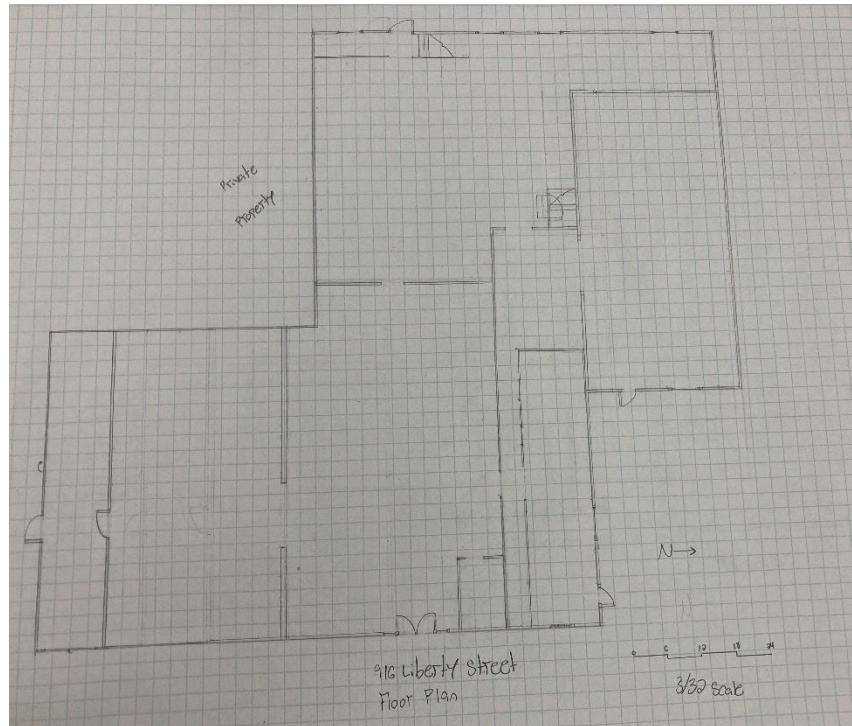


Figure 4: First floor plan of 916 Liberty St on a 3/32 scale.

The greatest alteration to the structure was initiated by D. Letcher Stoner who bought the property in 1949. Stoner used 916 Liberty St. for his business as a plumbing annex of Stoner's hardware store.⁴⁸ On June 13, 1953, Stoner contracted Bernard Cline to install 48'x50' concrete block walls for \$7,000.⁴⁹ Concrete blocks were standardized in 1924 to improve durability and reliability since the quality of concrete blocks was questionable prior to its standardization.⁵⁰ The standard dimensions of concrete block were 16in in length with an 8in width and height. These dimensions line up with the measurements taken of the concrete blocks at LibertyTown Arts. The use of concrete blocks for this structure shows its accessibility. While \$7,000 for installation of the concrete blocks is not that cheap, it is cheaper than other building materials. For instance,

⁴⁸“About Libertytown” libertytownarts, Liberty Town Arts Workshop, <https://libertytownarts.com/about-libertytown/>.

⁴⁹City of Fredericksburg Permit to Construct, Alter, or Repair, 1950-1960-L, Permit 1209; June 13, 1953; Fredericksburg Research Resources.

⁵⁰Christine Henry, “Concrete and Concrete Block,” Hisp 305: Historic Building Technologies (class lecture, University of Mary Washington, Fredericksburg, VA, March 7, 2022).

in 1956, an installation of 32'x50' brick walls cost \$24,000.⁵¹ The democratization of concrete block began shortly after it was standardized, as shown in a 1939 Sears building materials catalog where there was an advertisement for a concrete block machine for \$32.95, \$672.55 in today's U.S. dollar (figure 5).⁵² While the concrete block machine is not incredibly cheap, once someone had purchased the machine they could cheaply make concrete blocks to build with instead of hiring someone to come and build since all that is required to make concrete is cement, "the chemically active binder," aggregates, and water.⁵³



Figure 5: 1939 Sears catalog advertisement for a concrete block machine.

Another interesting feature of LibertyTown Arts are the overhead garage doors. There are four total, two of which can be seen from the exterior and two of which are only visible from the

⁵¹City of Fredericksburg Permit to Construct, Alter, or Repair, 1950-1960-L., Permit 1209; June 13, 1953; Fredericksburg Research Resources.

⁵²"Sears Building Materials," Sears, Roebuck and Co., 1939, Pg.29, <https://acrobat.adobe.com/link/review?uri=urn:aaid:scds:US:8d328248-7575-3593-9932-e4365c69b412#pageNum=29>.

⁵³Pamela Simpson, *Cheap, quick, & easy : imitative architectural materials, 1870-1930*, (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1999), 9.

inside. While the exact date of the garages' installation is unknown, it is known that they would have not been a part of the original construction, as overhang garages were not invented until 1921.⁵⁴ The garages were most likely installed when the structure was a farm products store or a warehouse since they would have provided easy access into the interior for drop offs of the store's respective products. One of the interior garages shows that the original structure has been added onto since the garage would have had to be on an exterior wall at some point to serve any purpose (figure 6). The other interior garage, along the front facade, was covered up by adding concrete blocks to the opening it once occupied (figure 7).



Figure 6: Garage that is now a part of an interior wall.

⁵⁴“Invention of the Upward-Acting Garage Door,” Overhead Door, accessed March 31, 2022, <https://www.overheaddoor.com/invention-of-the-garage-door#:~:text=In%201921%2C%20Overhead%20Door%20Corporation.ft>.



Figure 7: The previous area of the front façade garage.

In the space where the front facade garage was, was not only filled in by concrete blocks but also by glass blocks to make a 4x7 glass block window (figures 8 and 9). The idea of glass blocks solidified in the late 1800s when Gustave Falconnier patented the first hollow glass blocks.⁵⁵ These blocks were created using mold blowing, in which glassblowers “breathed out moisture-laden air that ultimately condensed.”⁵⁶ The sides of the blocks were designed to hold mortar, as seen with the mortar in between the blocks at LibertyTown. While the creation of the glass block dates back to patents from 1886 to 1907, the glass blocks at LibertyTown could not have been original to the structure since a garage used to take up the space the window now

⁵⁵Kristel De Vis, Patric Jacobs, Joost Caen, and Koen Janssens, “The Use of Glass Bricks in Architecture in the 19th and 20th Centuries: A Case Study,” (Ph.D. diss., University of Antwerp) https://www.researchgate.net/profile/Kristel-De-Vis/publication/271523784_The_use_of_glass_bricks_in_architecture_in_the_19th_and_20th_centuries_a_case_study/links/54cb709f0cf2240c27e7e0cd/The-use-of-glass-bricks-in-architecture-in-the-19th-and-20th-centuries-a-case-study.pdf, 195.

⁵⁶Ibid.

occupies.⁵⁷ Glass blocks were at the height of their popularity in the 1930s; however, the window could have been installed later than that, as it has made comebacks in the 1980s and even today.⁵⁸

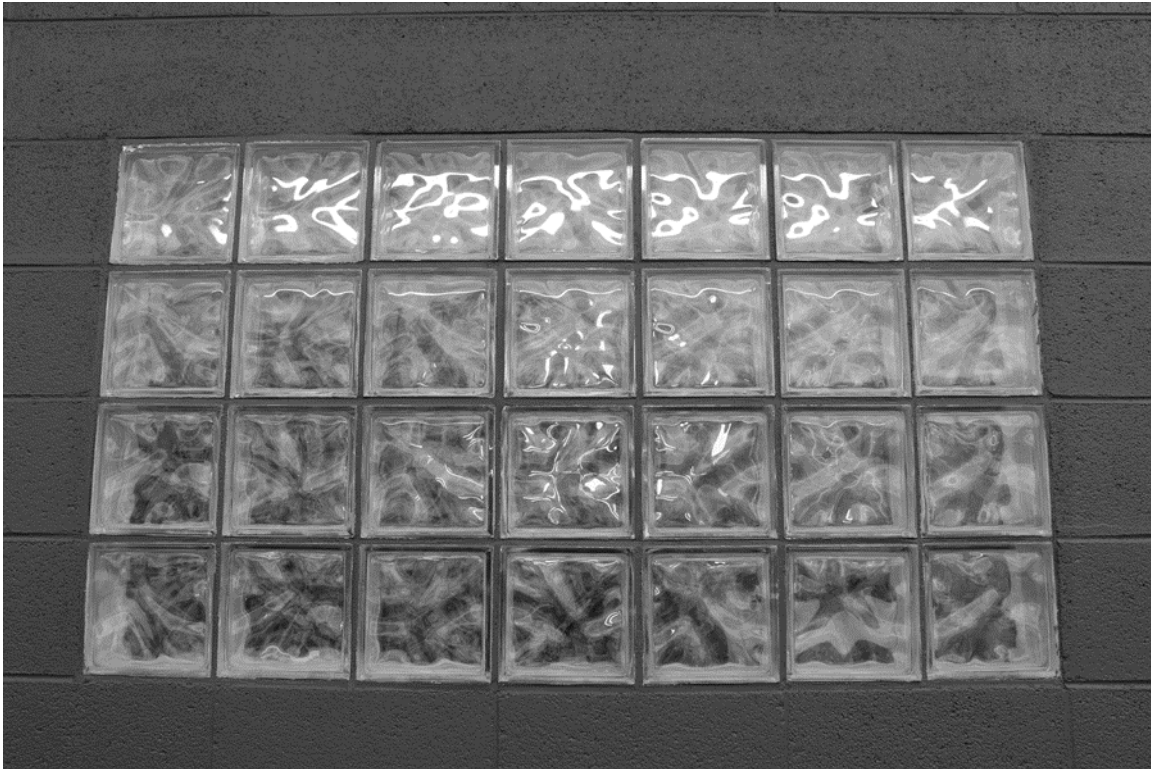


Figure 8: Glass block window along the front façade.

⁵⁷Vis, Jacobs, Caen, and Janssens, “The Use of Glass Bricks in Architecture in the 19th and 20th Centuries: A Case Study,” 196.

⁵⁸“History of Glass Block in Architectural Design,” Seven Glass Block, April 12, 2021, <https://sevesglassblockinc.com/blog/history-glass-block-architectural-design#:~:text=Glass%20block%20quickly%20became%20popular,in%20the%201930s%20and%201940s>.

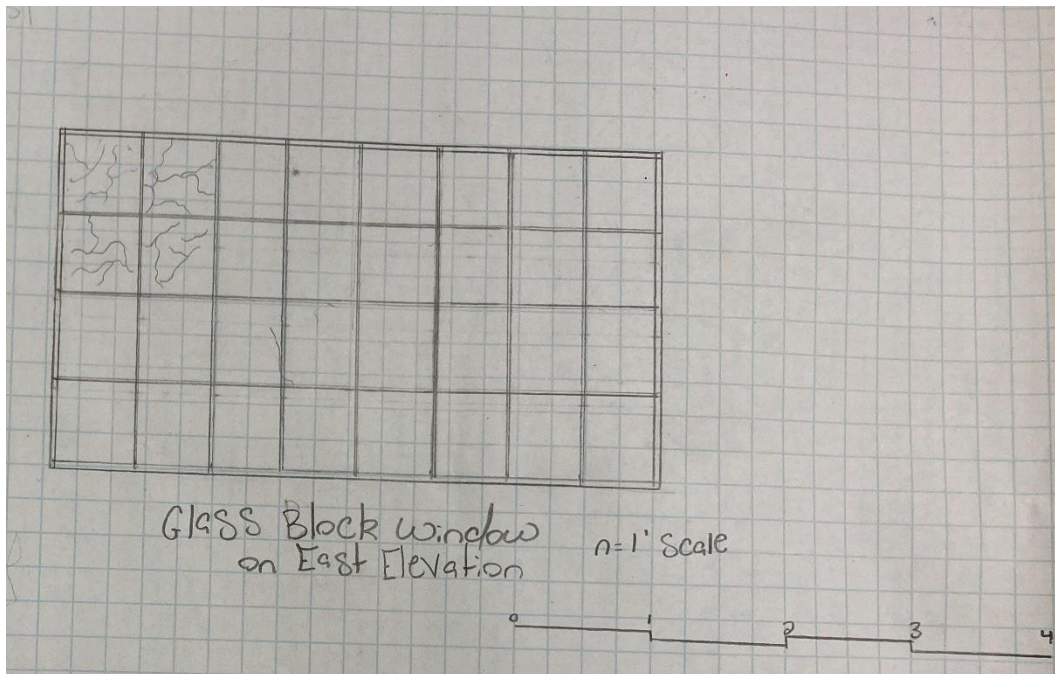


Figure 9: Detail drawing of the glass block window on the east elevation in a $n = 1'$ scale.

Lastly, one aspect of the structure that could potentially be dated back to its construction is 916 Liberty St.'s false front. A false front is a “front wall that extends above the roof and side of a building to create a more impressive facade.”⁵⁹ Although false fronts were mainly used in the Midwest and western territories, there are still examples of false fronts being used in the East Coast. Business owners were often reluctant to fully invest in a put together structure if they were not sure the business was going to succeed.⁶⁰ Therefore, to make the business appear successful and prosperous, business owners would put up a false front in order to attract customers through an appealing exterior.⁶¹ In the case of LibertyTown, the false front obstructs the view of being able to see the second floor of the west part of the building. This gives the exterior a more leveled appearance. Furthermore, since the building has a flat roof, the false front

⁵⁹“False Front Commercial,” History Colorado, accessed March 31, 2022, <https://www.historycolorado.org/false-front-commercial>.

⁶⁰Ibid.

⁶¹Ibid.

allows for there to be a slight hipped roof overhang which is more visually appealing to look at than a flat roof (figure 10).



Figure 10: Front elevation of 916 Liberty St.

The material culture of 916 Liberty St, or LibertyTown Arts Workshop, is a great example of how modern construction materials were used during the 20th century. It displays how materials, such as concrete blocks and timber, were more accessible. Moreover, this structure shows how buildings can change depending on their function, as demonstrated by the installation of the overhead garage doors. In all, 916 Liberty St. displays how quickly building technologies changed with the turn of the 20th century.

Appendix:

Address: Fredericksburg, VA	Column1	Column2	Column3	Column4	Column5	Column6	Column7	Column8	Column9
Grantors or Devisors Last Name	Grantors or Devisors First Name	Grantees or Devises Last Name	Grantees or Devises First Name	Recorded - Book	Recorded - Page	When Dated	When Recorded	Kind	Cost
Stoner Taylor	Mary	Stoner Taylor	Weber	130002217	N/A	8/5/2013	08/9/2013	DOG	\$887,200 (assessed)
Stoner	Violette M.	Stoner Taylor	Mary	WF0400000	81	N/A	5/19/1993	11/10/2004	Will
Stoner	Violette M. and D. Letcher	Stoner	Violette M.	199	666	12/12/1985	12/23/1985	DOG	\$188,700 (assessed)
Shelton	P. Evans and Sayde G.	Stoner	D. Letcher	86	373	4/22/1949	4/29/1949	DBS	\$4,800
Kline and Bawler	Frank and Jennie; Emerson	Shelton	P. Evans and Sayde G.	84	77	7/19/1947	7/31/1947	DBS	\$3,375
Clore	R.L. and Nora J.	Bawler	W.H.	50	325	6/13/1918	6/29/1918	DBS	\$1,200
Pratt	Stephen C. and Jamie Lee	Clore	R.L. and Nora	50	44	7/9/1917	7/17/1917	DBS	\$1,200
Quinn	Mary	Pratt	Stephen C. and Jamie Lee	49	298	6/5/1916	6/14/1916	DBS	\$1,200
Quinn	S.J.	Quinn	Mary (Wife)	J	241	10/15/1909	9/13/1910	Will	N/A
		James	Sallie (Child)						
		Hicks	Mary (Child)						
		Morrison	Carrie (Child)						
		Quinn	Silvanus (Child)						
		Quinn	Mattie (Child)						
		Quinn	William (Child)						
		Quinn	Nannie (Child)						
Ficklen; Little	J.B.; William A. (Trustee)	DuVal	James	Q	241	8/19/1853	8/20/1853	DBS	\$1,700
Property Description #1: That certain tract or parcel of land with all buildings and improvements thereon, and rights and privileges thereto appurtenant situate, lying and being in Fredericksburg, Virginia, on Liberty Street, between William Street and Hanover Street and bounded and described as follows: Beginning at a post on the west side of Liberty Street, adjoining the Lane property; thence 72.4 feet to a stake in Lane's line; thence 30.0 feet to another stake in the rear line of the Lane property; thence southeastwardly on a line nearly parallel to Barton street, being the rear line of a lot conveyed to John D. Hamilton and Pearl B Hamilton, 23.4 feet to a stake in Hirsch's line; thence 39.9 feet to a stake in the line with Bundy and Williams; thence along the latter property line 78.1 feet to Liberty Street; thence northerly along Liberty Street 51.0 feet to the point of BEGINNING. A plat made by J.C. Russell, C.S., dated October 3, 1947, of the lot herein conveyed and another lot on Barton Street Conveyed to John D. Hamilton, etux, is attached to the Deed in Deed Book 86, at page 375.									

This table showcases the chain of title for 916 Liberty St. It lists all the owners from deeds of bargain and sale from when the structure was constructed, in 1907, to present day.

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